

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 MC-02 ACDA-05 AID-05 IGA-02

TRSE-00 OMB-01 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03 H-02 /071 W
----- 039705

P R 262210Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1714

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CARACAS 0940

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, VE

SUBJECT: REGIONAL STUDY ON CONVENTIONAL ARMS SUPPLY RESTRAINTS

REF: STATE 015423

SUMMARY. THE GOV WOULD REACT NEGATIVELY TO A U.S. LEAD IN
REGIONAL ARMS RESTRAINTS, WHICH VENEZUELANS WOULD SEE AS
PATERNALISTIC MEDDLING AND A THREAT TO LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY.

AT THE SAME TIME, VENEZUELA, AS A PARTICIPANT IN THE ANDEAN AREA
ARMS LIMITATION TALKS, IS ALREADY EXAMINING POSSIBLE ARMS
RESTRAINTS. THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT QUIETLY ENCOURAGE THESE

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NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH THE GOV WOULD LIKE TO BROADEN TO INCLUDE

ALL LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES. BEFORE TAKING ADDITIONAL STEPS, THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO ALLOW TIME TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT UPON THE GOV AND OTHER LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS OF CUBA'S EXTENSIVE INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA.

WITH RESPECT TO TERMINATION OR SHARP REDUCTION OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE, THE EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT THE U.S. (A) AT SENIOR LEVELS ASSURE VENEZUELA THAT SUCH CUTBACKS DO NOT REPRESENT A DECLINING INTEREST IN CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY, AND (B) SEEK NEW FORMS OF COOPERATION AND CONTACT WITH THE VENEZUELAN ARMED FORCES. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY'S RESPONSES TO QUERIES CONTAINED PARA 2 REFTEL FOLLOW BELOW:

(A) THE PRINCIPAL REASONS WHY THE GOV FAVORS REGIONAL CONVENTIONAL ARMS RESTRAINTS ARE TO INCREASE RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTING PLANS FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT; TO REDUCE THE DANGERS OF CONFLICT AMONG LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES AND THEREBY ENHANCE LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY; TO PROMOTE A FRAMEWORK FOR MAINTAINING A LONG-TERM EQUILIBRIUM OF POWER IN LATIN AMERICA; AND TO LESSEN DEPENDENCY UPON FOREIGN SUPPLIERS, ESPECIALLY THE U.S., AND REDUCE COSTLY IMPORTS.

(B) THE OBSTACLES WHICH THE GOV MIGHT PERCEIVE TO REGIONAL ARMS RESTRAINTS ARE THAT SUCH ARRANGEMENTS COULD IMPINGE TOO GREATLY UPON VENEZUELAN SOVEREIGNTY; MIGHT LIMIT THE GOV'S ABILITY TO EXTEND ITS INFLUENCE; COULD WEAKEN THE GOVERNMENT'S HAND IN DEALING WITH ANY EXTERNAL THREAT, POTENTIAL BORDER PROBLEMS OR ANY RESURGENCE OF GUERRILLA ACTIVITY; AND COULD INTERFERE WITH ONGOING GOV PLANS FOR MODERNIZING THE VENEZUELAN ARMED FORCES. THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL PRESSURE TODAY IN VENEZUELA FOR PLACING NEW RESTRAINTS ON THE ARMED FORCES. MOST IMPORTANT, CUBA'S ACTIVITIES IN ANGOLA POSE A MAJOR OBSTACLE TO THE GOV'S ACCEPTANCE OF RESTRAINTS.

(C) AS ONE OF THE AYACUCHO SIGNATORIES, VENEZUELA IS PARTICIPATING IN THE ANDEAN AREA ARMS LIMITATION TALKS, SCHEDULED TO HAVE THEIR THIRD MEETING IN LA PAZ IN MARCH 1976. THE GOV WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND THESE NEGOTIATIONS TO INCLUDE ALL CONFIDENTIAL

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LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES, BRAZIL IN PARTICULAR. THESE ANDEAN AREA TALKS, WHICH HAVE ALREADY BECOME INVOLVED IN SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES, HAVE THE STRONG ADVANTAGE OF PROVIDING AN EXISTING FORUM, ESTABLISHED AT THE INITIATIVE OF LATIN AMERICANS THEMSELVES, FOR EXAMINING ARMS LIMITATION PROPOSALS.

(D) THE GOV WOULD REACT STRONGLY AGAINST ANY U.S. LEAD TO INDUCE THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES TO RESTRAIN THEIR

FORCES. THE GOV WOULD SEE U.S. INITIATIVES IN THIS AREA-- CERTAINLY THOSE ENVISAGED IN PARA. 4 REFTEL--AS AN EFFORT TO PERPETUATE LATIN AMERICAN DEPENDENCY UPON THE U.S., TO PLACE LATIN AMERICA IN A PERMANENT POSITION OF INFERIORITY, AND TO OBSTRUCT PROGRESS TOWARDS LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY AND THE EMERGENCE OF LATIN AMERICA AS A NEW CENTER OF WORLD POWER. IN RESPONSE TO A STRONG U.S. ROLE, THE GOV MIGHT, FOR EXAMPLE, CALL FOR SOME FORM OF LATIN AMERICAN DEFENSE ORGANIZATION, PARALLELING SELA, ADVOCATE SCHEMES FOR LATIN AMERICA MULTINATIONAL DEFENSE INDUSTRIES, AND CALL UPON THE U.S. FOR RECIPROCAL GUARANTEES TO REFRAIN FROM THE USE OF FORCE IN LATIN AMERICA, INCLUDING THE CARIBBEAN AND PANAMA.

(E) THE ANDEAN ARMS LIMITATION TALKS ARE CONSIDERING LIMITATION OF MILITARY EXPENDITURES; PROHIBITION ON GENOCIDAL ARMS, AND NUMERICAL LIMITS ON CERTAIN ARMS. NEGOTIATED AGREEMENTS IN ANY OF THESE AREAS WOULD REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT RESTRAINT.

2. IN THE EMBASSY'S VIEW, THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY AT PRESENT TO INDUCE THE GOV TO ENTER INTO ARMS LIMITATION AGREEMENTS IS FOR THE U.S. TO DO WHATEVER IT CAN QUIETLY BEHIND THE SCENES TO FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF THE ANDEAN ARMS LIMITATION TALKS. SINCE THE GOV IS NOT A LEADER IN THESE TALKS AND WOULD BE HIGHLY SENSITIVE TO SIGNS OF U.S. INTERFERENCE, THE MOST APPROPRIATE POSTURE HERE WOULD BE ONE OF LOW-KEY INTEREST AND GENERAL EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT. THE EMBASSY HOPES THAT, BEFORE TAKING FURTHER STEPS IN THIS FIELD, THE DEPARTMENT

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 MC-02 ACDA-05 AID-05 IGA-02 OMB-01

TRSE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 L-03 H-02 /071 W

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P R 262210Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1715

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CARACAS 0940

ALLOW TIME FOR THE LESSONS OF CUBA IN ANGOLA TO SINK INTO THE GOV'S POLITICO-MILITARY THINKING. WE SHOULD NOT OVERLOOK THE FACT THAT CUBA'S ACTIONS MAY HAVE GIVEN NEW LIFE TO THE RIO TRATY AT A TIME WHEN SOME LATIN AMERICANS HAVE BEN INCREASINGLY EMPHASIZING THEIR DESIRE TO FORGE AN EXCLUSIVE LATIN AMERICAN BLOC.

3. WITH RESPECT TO PARA. 3 REFTTEL, SINCE FUTURE FMS CREDITS TO VENEZUELA ARE IN DOUBT, THE EMBASSY HAS GIVEN THOUGHT FOR SOME TIME TO THE QUESTION OF WHAT POLICIES THE U.S. SHOULD PURSUE IF OUR TRADITIONAL FOREIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS SHOULD BE TERMINATED OR CUT SHARPLY. ASSUMING THERE WOULD BE
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A DECLINE IN THESE PROGRAMS, THE EMBASSY'S CASP SUBMISSION FOR FY 76-77 CONTAINED THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:
QUOTE (1) THE U.S. SHOULD SEEK NEW FORMS OF COOPERATION AND CONTACT WITH THE VENEZUELAN ARMED FORCES APART FROM MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. ILLUSTRATIVELY, SUCH FORMS COULD INCLUDE: MORE EXTENSIVE INTERCHANGE OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE; MORE FREQUENT JOINT EXERCISES; INCREASED JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO CARIBBEAN SECURITY; MORE BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS OF DEFENSE NEEDS, MORE EQUIPMENT STANDARDIZATION; COOPERATIVE EXCHANGE PROGRAMS, AND AN INCREASED EXCHANGE OF HIGH-LEVEL VISITS BETWEEN U.S. AND VENEZUELAN MILITARY LEADERS...(2) THE U.S. AT SENIOR LEVELS SHOULD ASSURE VENEZUELA THAT A GRADUAL REDUCTION OF FMS CREDITS DOES NOT REPRESENT A DECLINING INTEREST IN CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY, AND THE U.S. SHOULD ATTEMPT TO ENSURE THAT IT REMAINS AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT, TRAINING, AND TECHNOLOGY. END QUOTE.
IN VIEW OF THE FASCELL AMENDMENT TO TERMINATE MAP TRAINING PROGRAMS WITH VENEZUELA, THE EMBASSY WOULD FURTHER RECOMMEND THAT THE U.S. EXAMINE ALL POSSIBLE AVENUES FOR CONTINUING THE

TRAINING OF VENEZUELAN MILITARY OFFICERS BY THE U.S. THESE
TRAINING PROGRAMS ARE PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE
OF OUR INFLUENCE WITH THE VENEZUELAN ARMED FORCES.

4. THIS MESSAGE HAS BEEN COORDINATED WITH DAO AND
MILGP, BUT WILL NOT BE SEEN BY THE AMBASSADOR UNTIL
HIS RETURN TO CARACAS ON JANUARY 27.
SHLAUDEMAM

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Message Attributes

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